

VI. APPLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND REVIEW PROCESS

A. APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Applicants must submit one signed original application (clearly marked "original") and four (4) copies of the entire application package (including attachments).

The original application and all four copies must be received by OCCG on or before 5:00 p.m. on April 20, 1999. Applications with a postmarked date on or before April 20, 1999 that arrive to OCCG after the specified date and time will **NOT** be accepted and will be returned unopened.

APPLICATIONS TRANSMITTED BY FACSIMILE (Fax) WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

It is the sole responsibility of the applicant(s) to insure that OCCG receives the required original and four (4) copies of their application(s) by the above deadline. Each application must be complete when submitted. Incomplete or late applications will be considered non-responsive and **WILL NOT** be reviewed. No changes, modifications, corrections, or additions may be made to the application(s) once it has been received. **NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE.**

The application package must be labeled and submitted under sealed cover as follows:

For Regular Mail:

Barbara Marquez, Chief
Office of the Community Challenge Grants
Department of Health Services
P.O. Box 942732
Sacramento, CA 94234-7320
Attn: CCG RFA

For Hand Delivery or Overnight Mail:

Barbara Marquez, Chief
Office of the Community Challenge Grants
Department of Health Services
714 P Street, Room 550
Sacramento, CA 95814
ATTN: CCG RFA

Applicants are cautioned that the departmental processing time of U.S. Mail can add up to 48 hours to the delivery time of mail within the Department. Applications, regardless of postmark, received after the proposal submission deadline will be returned unopened. Mail carrier's documentation is NOT considered proof of receipt. An "Application Receipt" may be provided to the carrier or person making the delivery upon request. This document shall constitute the only proof of timely submission to DHS.

All applicants agree, in submitting an application, that DHS is authorized to verify any and all claimed information and to verify any references named in their application. All applications received by the OCCG are subject to the provisions of the "Public Record Act" (Government Code Section 6250 et seq.) and are not confidential after completion of the selection process.

Applications received from agencies that did not submit a Letter of Intent to Apply by the March 19, 1999 (5:00 p.m.) deadline **WILL NOT** be accepted and will be returned unopened to the sender.

The DHS may reject any or all applications received. The DHS may also waive any immaterial deviation in any application. The DHS waiver of any immaterial defect(s) shall not excuse an applicant from full compliance with the grant terms if a grant is awarded.

The cost of developing applications is entirely the responsibility of the proposing entity and shall not be chargeable to the State of California or included in any cost elements of the application.

B. APPLICATION SCREENING

All applications will be date and time stamped upon receipt by the OCCG. Each application received by **April 20, 1999, by 5:00 p.m.**, will be screened for completeness and compliance with the requirements outlined in PART ONE and PART TWO of this RFA. Applications that do not comply with requirements will be considered non-responsive and excluded from the review. Omission of any required document or form, failure to use required formats for response, or failure to respond to any requirement may lead to rejection of the application prior to the technical evaluation.

C. APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS AND SCORING

Each application received by OCCG by the specified date and time will be reviewed for completeness and compliance with the RFA instructions. **LATE, INCOMPLETE OR NON-COMPLIANT APPLICATIONS WILL BE REJECTED.**

Grantee selection will be based on the score received in the technical review and secondary analyses by DHS.

Criteria for grantee selection and final funding determination are:

- a. Degree of collaboration and community input into the project.
- b. Degree of involvement of youth, parents and families within the community.
- c. Degree of involvement of non-governmental organizations.
- d. Degree of demonstrated need for the project in the community.
- e. Geographic, economic, population, and ethnic diversity.
- f. Feasibility.
- g. Cost effectiveness.

- h. Degree to which the project outcomes and objectives can be measured and evaluated.
- i. Degree of applicant's administrative, fiscal and programmatic capability to implement the project.
- j. Degree to which proposed project and interventions are based on research and tested program designs.
- k. Degree of inclusion of innovative strategies, particularly those strategies targeting parents, guardians or other parenting adults; women at risk for out-of-wedlock pregnancy; or men at risk of absentee fatherhood.
- l. Degree of satisfactory past performance and compliance with grant agreement requirements, for applicants that currently receive, or have previously received, CCG Program funds.

1. Technical Review Process

Applications will be reviewed against technical criteria. A panel with requisite expertise and experience selected by OCCG will review applications. The technical review will result in a score for each application based on technical merit. Applications failing to receive a passing score of a minimum of 70 points may be eliminated from further funding consideration.

The weight assigned to each application section is as follows:

Agency Capability	3
Community Collaborative	3
Community Assessment	3
Project Description	3
Project Scope of Work	4
Evaluation Plan	2
Budget and Justification	2

Each of the seven sections will be reviewed and will be scored using a five point scale. The total number of points received per section will be multiplied by the specified weight for each section. The five point scale will consist of the following ratings:

5 points = outstanding
 4 points = very good
 3 points = adequate
 2 points = poor
 1 point = inadequate

e.g., If the weighting for a section is 3, and the response is judged to be very good (4), the score for the section is $3 \times 4 = 12$. The maximum possible total score for all sections is 100. A passing score is 70 points.

A passing score is not a guarantee of funding.

2. Secondary Analysis

The score resulting from the technical review will be the initial basis for further consideration of a grant award. Based on the score and secondary analysis of the applications, DHS will make final award decisions and funding determinations. Final award decisions are subject to the availability of funds and may differ from the amount requested in the application.

The DHS reserves the right to fund or not fund any application. An application failing to receive a minimum score of 70 points may be funded, if the application is determined not to impede or compromise the quality of the project and its services and meets one or more of the following criteria:

- The application demonstrates significant need.
- There is no other existing teen pregnancy prevention programs in the geographic area served by the applicant.
- The award supports equitable geographic distribution of funds.
- The application will be a viable project with the provision of technical assistance from the DHS.
- The application will expand availability and accessibility of teen pregnancy prevention services.
- The award supports the DHS's intention to fund a minimum number of applications targeting each of the five populations specified in the CCG Program statutes.

As part of the selection process, the DHS may review an applicant's performance under current or prior grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements with the DHS. This may include, but is not limited to, a review of financial and programmatic audits. The DHS reserves the right to reject an application based on an applicant's failure to comply with contractual requirements in prior grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements with the DHS.

Final selection for funding will be based on the geographic distribution of projects. An equitable and balanced geographic distribution of funds will be achieved.

The DHS reserves the right to reject any proposed project(s) or project component(s) that is contrary to law or personal rights and freedoms. DHS also reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications in response to this RFA.

D. GRANT AGREEMENT AWARD PROCESS

Applicants selected as potential candidates for funding will be notified by mail on May 20, 1999. The DHS reserves the right to negotiate the budget and scope of work and not award a contract if changes cannot be mutually agreed upon. Grant negotiations will begin immediately following the posting of the awards. In some cases, a site visit may be requested along with a copy of the Community Assessment Report. Regarding the scheduling of grant negotiation meetings, priority will be given to applicants with current CCG Program funding.

A final "Notice of Intent to Award" the grants, including the final recommended funding level, will be mailed to successful applicants upon completion of grant negotiations. If a successful applicant fails to finalize a Budget and/or Scope of Work or if the requested changes cannot be mutually agreed upon, the DHS reserves the right to withdraw the grant award or delay the start of the grant agreement term.

Each applicant not selected for funding will be notified of the denial and will be provided with an explanation as to the reasons why the application was not funded.

E. APPEAL PROCESS

Only those agencies submitting applications according to the RFA instructions and who were not funded may appeal. **Applicants may not appeal solely on the basis of funding level.** There is no appeal process for late or incomplete applications. Appeals shall be limited to the grounds that DHS failed to correctly apply the standards for reviewing applications in accordance with this RFA. The appellant must file a written appeal, which includes the issue(s) in dispute, the legal authority or other basis for the appellant's position, and the remedy sought. **Letters appealing the final application selection must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. June 3, 1999, and should be directed to:**

Barbara Marquez, Chief
Office of Community Challenge Grants
Department of Health Services
714 P Street, Room 550
P.O. Box 942732
Sacramento, CA 94234-7320

The Deputy Director of Primary Care and Family Health will be the appeal officer and may hold an oral hearing to render a decision based on the contents of the written appeal letter and the hearing. **The decision of the Deputy Director shall be final; there is no further administrative appeal.** Appellants will be notified of decisions regarding their appeal in writing within fifteen (15) working days of the hearing date.